

- BC's population reaches 4,606,451
- Inflation dips to 1.3% in May
- Retail sales inch ahead 0.2% in April

Population

- **British Columbia's population was estimated at 4,606,451 on April 1st, an increase of 1.0% over April 2011.** This marks the fifth consecutive net increase in BC's population. The Prairies continued to lead the way in population growth as Alberta (+2.4%), Saskatchewan (+1.9%), and Manitoba (+1.3%) all posted increases above the national average (+1.1%). BC's population growth ranked fifth among the provinces, behind Ontario (+1.1%), but ahead of Quebec (+0.9%). Newfoundland (-0.2%) was the only province to record a decline in population during the first quarter. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Prices

- **BC's year-over-year inflation rate was 1.3% in May.** Energy prices rose 2.7%, the lowest rate of increase recorded since October 2009. This, together with a 1.0% increase in prices of other goods and services, helped moderate the province's inflation rate in May.

Higher prices at both restaurants (+2.2%) and grocers (+2.1%) contributed to the overall rise in food costs (+2.2%), as fresh fruit (+8.6%), meat (+3.9%), and fish and other seafood (+4.5%) prices rose. Conversely, fresh vegetable prices (-4.7%) continued to decline.

Health and personal care costs took a dip in May (-0.7%), driven by lower medicinal and pharmaceutical prices (-4.2%).

Transportation costs in BC increased 2.4% compared to May 2011, with gas (+1.3%),

insurance (+5.2%), and intercity transportation (+4.8%) costs rising steadily.

Opposing price changes in rented (+1.1%) and owned (-1.2) accommodation resulted in unchanged shelter costs overall in BC, despite upward pressure from water, fuel and electricity prices (+5.1%).

Clothing and footwear costs in BC climbed 4.1%, compared to May of 2011. Prices were 7.6% higher for children's clothing, and 4.2% higher for footwear. Nationally, the cost of children's clothing and footwear dropped 2.7% and 1.6%, respectively.

Recreation, education, and reading (+0.3%) costs rose marginally, increasing for the first time since September, as recreation costs continued to fall (-0.4%), and education and reading materials edged up (+1.8%).

Nationwide, the inflation rate was 1.2%, placing British Columbia (+1.3%) slightly above the national average (+1.2%). Alberta (+0.4%) continued to see the lowest year-over-year increase in consumer prices, while Newfoundland and Labrador (+2.5) continued to record the highest of increase at the provincial level.

Prices in both Victoria (+1.2%) and Vancouver (+1.5%) increased at the lowest rates to date of 2012. Of Canadian cities surveyed, St. Johns had the highest year-over-year increases, at 2.4%, while Calgary's consumer prices rose just 0.3%.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Report

City Living: How do the CMAs compare to the rest of the province?

Did you know...

British Columbians consider emergency medical technicians (90%), firefighters (89%), and nurses (88%) the most trustworthy professions. *Data Source: Ipsos Reid*

The Economy

- **Retailers in British Columbia saw receipts edge 0.2% (*seasonally adjusted*) lower in April with six of eleven sub-sectors recording a slowdown.** Increased sales at food and beverage (+2.8%) and general merchandise stores (+1.2%) failed to offset weakness among building material & garden equipment suppliers (-4.2%), gasoline stations (-3.4%), and motor vehicle & parts dealers (-2.0%).

Nationally, retail sales retreated 0.5% in April chiefly driven by a slowdown in revenues of motor vehicle and parts dealers (-1.2%). Four provinces recorded lower receipts in April, with Ontario (-1.1%) and Quebec (-0.5%) being responsible for most of the national decline. Alberta (-0.2%) and BC registered comparatively small slowdowns.

Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **Wholesale sales in British Columbia rose 1.6% (*seasonally adjusted*) in April, recovering all of the ground lost during the previous month.** Wholesalers of personal & household goods (+2.9%), food, beverage & tobacco products (+2.5%), and building materials & supplies (+1.1%) posted increases, offsetting flagging sales (-1.6%) in the machinery, equipment & supplies sector.

At the national level, wholesale sales were up 1.5% in April, primarily due to higher revenues in the agricultural supply industry (+48.5%). Given the source of the increase, it is perhaps not surprising that Saskatchewan (+6.7%), Manitoba (+6.1%), and Alberta (+4.6%) registered the most substantial gains. BC was the only other province where sales growth exceeded the national average.

Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

Tourism

- **Visitor entries to Canada via British Columbia rose 1.1% (*seasonally adjusted*) in April, ending a three month decline that began in January.** The increase was entirely due to heightened visitor traffic from the US (+2.2%), with both same-day (+2.3%) and overnight visi-

tors (+2.1%) on the rise. The decline in travel from overseas countries continued. Entries dropped 2.6%, the largest decrease recorded since October 2011. Visitor entries from Europe (-3.8%) drove the decline, falling to the lowest levels seen since February 2011. Fewer entries from Asia (-2.0%) and other major regions (-1.7%) were also factors. However, entries from Africa rose 32.8%. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Health

- **In 2011, 5.0% of British Columbians aged 12 years and older reported having diabetes, down slightly (-0.4 percentage points) from 2007.¹** Males (5.2%) were slightly more likely than females (4.9%) to report this diagnosis.

Among British Columbia's senior citizens (aged 65 years and older), the likelihood of being diagnosed with diabetes was considerably higher. In 2011, an estimated 14.9% of British Columbia's seniors had diabetes, roughly triple the overall provincial rate. The difference between the sexes also substantially wider among BC's seniors with men (16.6%) being more likely than women (13.4%) to report having diabetes.

Data Source: SC Cat. no. 82-625-X

- **Approximately one in twelve (8.1%) British Columbians reported being diagnosed with asthma in 2011.** The likelihood of having asthma was noticeably higher among women (9.6%) than men (6.6%), a gap that persisted across age groups. Although the gap was at its most narrow (0.4 percentage points) among BC's youth (aged 12 to 19 years), it was widest among those aged 20 to 34 years (5.4 percentage points).

Since 2007 the rate of asthma diagnosis has risen steadily from 6.8% to the current rate of 8.1%, mainly due to the increase in the rate among women.

Data Source: SC Cat. no. 82-625-X

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¹ Includes females aged 15 year and older reporting a diagnosis of gestational diabetes.

City Living: How do the CMAs compare to the rest of the province?

Is city living unique?

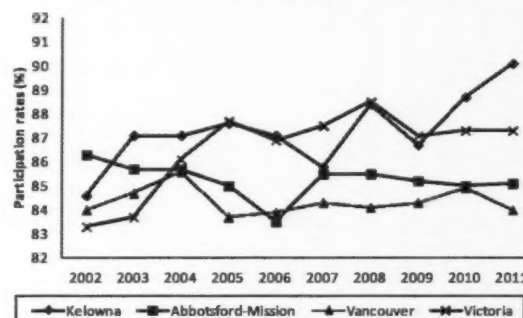
This report seeks to find out whether the complexity and diversity of city life leads to labour market differences between the Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs)¹ and the rest of the province. Additionally, are the CMAs all the same, or are there differences between the respective labour markets of these cities? To answer these questions an analysis of the labour market conditions of Kelowna, Abbotsford-Mission, Vancouver, Victoria and B.C. as a whole for core-working age individuals (25 to 54 years) is undertaken.

Participation

Over the past decade, the participation rates of those core-working age individuals in each of the CMAs have been substantially different. For example, in the latter part of the decade (2009 to 2011), Kelowna had serious growth in participation—relative to the other CMAs, who enjoyed marginal growth, or no growth whatsoever—with a jump of 3.4 percentage points in the participation rate. The growth in participation in Kelowna can be explained by the labour force growing at a faster rate than the population in 2010. However, in 2011, both the labour force and the population fell, but as a result of the population contracting more than the labour force, the participation rate continued its strong growth. Interestingly, from 2008 to 2009, when all the other CMAs were watching their respective participation

rates fall, Vancouver actually enjoyed some meagre growth in the participation rate. During this period, with the exception of Victoria, all the CMAs realized growth in their respective labour forces, as well as in their populations. Only Vancouver saw its labour force grow at a larger rate than the population of the area.

CMA rates of labour force participation



Source: Labour Force Survey
2011, Statistics Canada

In 2011, only Vancouver had a lower participation rate compared to the rest of the province (84.8%). Kelowna and Victoria had the two greatest participation rates, followed by Abbotsford-Mission with the third lowest participation rate.

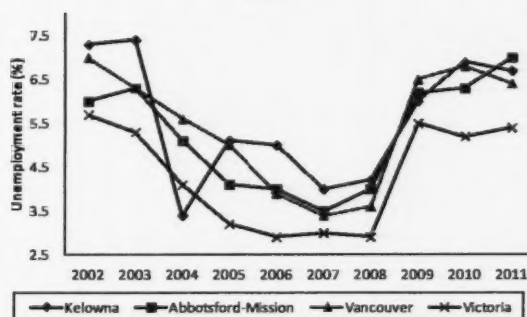
Unemployment

In 2011, only one of the CMAs, Abbotsford-Mission (7.0%), had a higher unemployment rate than the rest of the province, while Kelowna had the same unemployment rate (6.7%). Over the past decade the unemployment rates of the CMAs followed similar trends; however, there were a few occurrences

¹ For the definition of a Census Metropolitan Area, see: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/21-006-x/2008002/def-eng.htm>

of the unemployment rate breaking from the norm. From 2003 to 2004, all the CMAs realized a drop in their respective unemployment rates, but Kelowna saw its unemployment rate fall 4.0 percentage points—2.8 percentage points more than the next largest drop (Victoria and Abbotsford-Mission each dropped 1.2 percentage points). Subsequently, the unemployment rate in Kelowna increased in the next period, but remained below the 2003 rate. This large drop appears to be driven by an increase in the labour force from 2003 to 2004, but more substantially, by the number of unemployed individuals dropping by over half, in the same time frame.

Victoria has historically had lower unemployment rates



Source: Labour Force Survey
2011, Statistics Canada

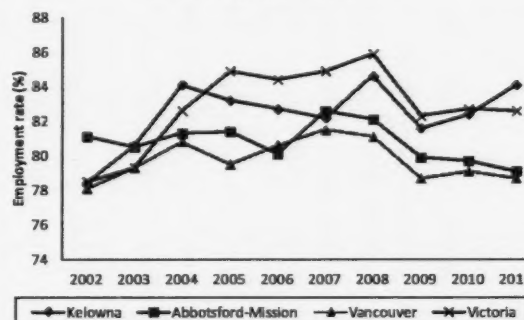
The economic downturn of 2008 had a consistent negative impact on the unemployment rates of the CMAs, as each CMA realized an increase in their respective unemployment rates in 2009, compared to the previous year, with the smallest gain in the unemployment rate occurring in Kelowna, at 1.8 percentage points. While all the other CMAs saw their unemployment rates increase from 2009 to 2010, only Victoria saw its rate fall. Interestingly, while all the other labour markets realized gains in both the labour force and the number of unemployed individuals, Victoria

was contracting, with the declines in the labour force as well as the number of unemployed. However, the number of unemployed individuals fell faster than the labour force, resulting in a drop in the unemployment rate.

Employment

In 2011, Kelowna led the CMAs with the greatest employment rate (84.1%), with Victoria close behind (82.6%), constituting the two CMAs with a higher employment rate than the rest of the province (79.1%). Abbotsford-Mission was on par with the rest of the province in terms of the rate of employment (79.1%), while Vancouver had the lowest rate of employment (78.7%).

CMA employment rates

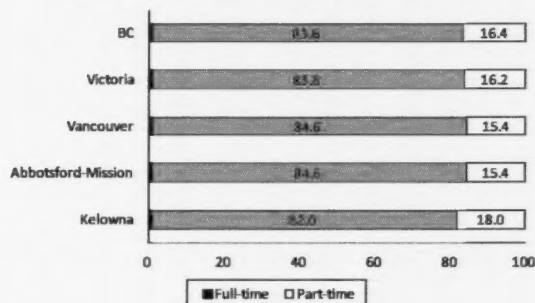


Source: Labour Force Survey
2011, Statistics Canada

From 2010 to 2011, all the CMAs, with the exception of Kelowna, saw their respective employment rates drop. Unfortunately, Kelowna's gains in the employment rate didn't come from actual gains in employment—which fell by over four percentage points—but from the population of core-working age contracting by over six percentage points. Incidentally, Vancouver was the only CMA to realize gains in overall employment from 2010 to 2011.

In terms of full and part-time employment, the CMAs had similar proportions of both components, with over 80 percent of total employment attributed to those employed on a full-time basis in 2011. Additionally, in the past year, all the CMAs had a larger proportion of total employment attributed to full-time employment when compared to the rest of the province at nearly 82 percent. This may suggest that finding full-time employment is more of a priority, or easier to obtain within a denser population.

Proportions of total employment attributed to part- and full-time employment, 2011



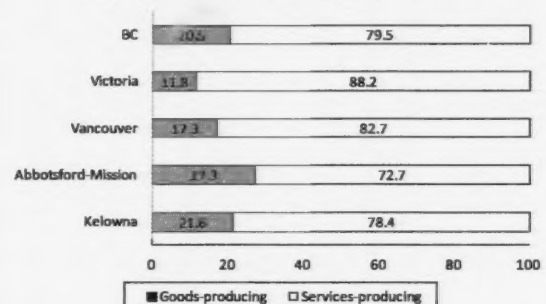
Source: Labour Force Survey
2011, Statistics Canada

Where do the employed work?

In 2011, all the CMAs had the majority of their employment in the services-producing sector, with Abbotsford-Mission—which had the least amount of employment in services—employing more than 70 percent of the work force in that sector. Additionally, Abbotsford-Mission and Kelowna were the only CMAs that had a lower proportion of services-producing sector employment than the provincial average (79.5%) in 2011. Victoria's service sector employed nearly 90 percent of those employed individuals, and this was likely driven by the employment strength of the trade; health care and social assistance,

and public administration industries, as they accounted for nearly 75,000 jobs in 2011. Relative to the other CMAs, Victoria's service sector employment dominance might be linked to the high proportion of students in the population, who typically find employment in the service-producing occupations during their studies. The trade industry is the largest employer in the services-producing sector across all of the CMAs.

Proportions of total employment attributed to the goods and services sectors, 2011



Source: Labour Force Survey
2011, Statistics Canada

Abbotsford-Mission had the largest share of work force employment attributed to the goods-producing sector. Construction was the largest employer in Abbotsford-Mission's goods-producing sector, employing nearly 46 percent of those individuals working in that sector. Furthermore, construction was uniformly the largest employer in the goods sector across all the CMAs. Additionally, all the CMAs had larger proportions of construction industry employment compared to the rest of the province (11.8%). This might be explained by the population density, as more people require more infrastructure, which requires construction. Additionally, the more rural parts of the province are more resource heavy, with the majority of mines and sawmills away from the urban centres, leading to increased propor-

tions of total employment attributed to those types of industries.

While the CMAs do follow similar trends overall, there are some interesting differences that arise at the more specific levels of detail. It is likely that the higher concentrations of individuals will always give rise to new and interesting labour market differences, just as the more rural populations have their own unique cultures that manifest in different labour market outcomes. These observations serve to illuminate the spirit and diversity of B.C.



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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)		
	Jan 1/2012	% change on one year ago
BC	4,597.9	1.0
Canada	34,670.4	1.1
GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 8)		
(BC - at market prices)	2010	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$ millions)	203,147	5.9
GDP (\$ 2002 millions)	167,140	3.0
GDP (\$ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)	36,899	1.4
Personal Disposable Income (\$ 2002 per Capita)	26,166	2.2
TRADE (\$ millions, seasonally adjusted)		
		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Apr 2012	3,150	-1.2
Merchandise Exports - Apr 2012	2,749	1.7
Retail Sales - Apr 2012	5,145	-0.2
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		
(all items - May 2012)	% change on one year ago	12-month avg % change
BC	1.3	1.9
Vancouver	1.5	2.0
Victoria	1.2	1.8
Canada	1.2	2.5
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		
(seasonally adjusted)	May 2012	% change on prev. month
Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC	-0.2	
Labour Force - BC	2,503.6	1.2
Employed - BC	2,318.6	0.0
Unemployed - BC	185.0	19.9
		Apr 2012
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	7.4	6.2
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	7.3	7.3
INTEREST RATES (percent)		
	Jun 20/2012	Jun 22/2011
Prime Business Rate	3.00	3.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.20	3.50
- 5 year	5.24	5.39
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE		
	Jun 20/2012	Jun 22/2011
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn \$ per US \$	1.0194	0.9775
(closing rate) US \$ per Cdn \$	1.0192	1.0276
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	May 2012	% change on one year ago
BC	836.13	0.5
Canada	863.53	3.1
SOURCES:		
Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada		
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics		
For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca		

Census 2011 Fast Facts

The age-sex data from the 2011 Census have been released. For the first time, since reporting began, persons 65 years of age and older outnumbered 0 to 14 year-olds in BC. The census counted 688,710 British Columbians who had crossed the milestone 65, slightly more than the 677,360 who have not yet made it to 15. Read more on the 2011 Census page:

<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/2011Census.aspx>

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New RSS Feeds From BC Stats

BC Stats has published several new RSS feeds, including: Aboriginal Peoples, Business and Industry, Census, Economic Statistics and more. <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Help/RSSFeeds.aspx>

The 2011 National Household Survey

Release dates have been set as:

May 8, 2013

- Immigration; Citizenship; Place of birth; Language; Ethnic origin; Visible minorities; Religion; Aboriginal Peoples

June 26, 2013

- Labour; Education; Place of work; Commuting to work; Mobility and migration; Language of work

August 14, 2013

- Income; Earnings; Housing; Shelter costs

<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/index-eng.cfm>

Released this week by BC Stats

- Consumer Price Index
- Population Highlights

Next week

- Business Indicators

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